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# Military Uniform Collectors Handbook

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**AAMUC FOOTLOCKER**

**John Kristelli, Editor**

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FORWORD

Since AAMUC was founded in 1977, is has been our policy to publish articles in our quarterly newsletter, FOOTLOCKER, which will foster proper preservation, restoration and cataloging of military clothing. Some of these articles were published as much as ten years ago, and are no longer readily available. For this reason, we asked John kristelli to compile the best of those articles to be reprinted in this format.

As for the credentials of the contributors, they are impressive. All are collectors in their own stead and all are trained or experienced in the field. John Kristelli, Dan Joyce and Willie (now just plain Will) Henson are all recent graduates with degrees in museum science. Bill Henson is a retires conservation specialist with the Smithsonian Institution.

While some of the techniques described here may be more than the average collector is willing to pursue, they are worth keeping in mind. Ownership of valuable historical items brings with it the responsibility to pass them on to future generations as intact as possible.

GIL SANOW II
Editor,
AAMUC FOOTLOCKER

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NOTE: Neither AAMUC nor any of the contibutors assume any responsibility for damages incirred in using the techniques described, though they are current practice in many museums.



"CARE OF THE UNIFORM COLLECTION"
by Bill Henson

All uniforms should be stored flat, in a cool, dry place away from light. Ultraviolet rays are harmful to cellulose and animal fiber. A temperature of 70 degrees and 40% relative humidity is ideal, and this condition should be maintained, as consistantly as possible, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The uniforms should be removed from storage from time to time for airing and cleaning if necessary. If folding is necessary, fold at waistline, cross the sleeves across the upper part being careful of the shoulders, follow the natural lines of the garment. Unbutton the coat and fold the button side so it rests on top of the button hole side. If the uniform must be stored on hangers, pad the hangers so they will support a larger area of the shoulder of the coat.

The information in this article may or may not suit your collection, but the basic facts remain the same. With that in mind the idea is to try to come as close to the ideal storage conditions as is feasible within the confinds of your available space for storage.

The best storage as far as the uniform is concerned would be a painted steel locker but they are expensive, especially if constructed to special specification. Wooden lockers are fine if precautions are taken to prevent the acid vapors given off by wooden materials from harming the uniforms.

The following is a drawing of a locker I constructed from wood with masonite shelves and doors. It was built 2 feet off the floor in a large closet located in the center part of my basement. This area was the best I could find which would maintain the temperature and relative humidity levels as close to the ideal as possible all year long.

The locker is 24 inches deep to use standard 4' X 8' material, length to suit your space. I coated all materials thoroughly with shellac to seal in the acid vapors. This can be done before or after assembly, which ever is more convenient. Each masonite shelf is also lined with acid free paper. A one inch space is left between the front edge of the shelf and the door to allow air movement to all shelves. Doors are made to fit tight and are held in place with turn buttons on the center post and wood strips on the right and left hand sides of the closet wall leaving a space to receive the edge of the door.

See illustration on page 6

# "CLOSET STORAGE OF MILITARY COSTUME"

by John Kristelli

Collecting military costume can be fun, interesting, and an investment. Yet, storing costume causes specific problems for the collector. Limited storage space not only restricts collecting practices but also reduces the collector's ability to store the pieces properly. This is unfortunate, because when the costume is carelessly stored, damage is what usually follows. Damaged costume reduces not only its resale value, but also its historical value. The following paragraphs will give some basic tips for storage of military costume, as prescribed in the conservation sciences.

Military uniforms, unlike some civilian fashions, are designed with thick materials and for sturdy wear. This lessens the need for many of the careful measures taken in the conservation practices, like flat storage and reinforced frills. So, military costume can be stored in a properly prepared closet and still be reasonably safe. This is ideal, because many costume collectors store their collections in closets. The objective, therefore, is to convert a closet or wardrobe into a safe environment for military costume.

First, choose a closet that you can use for only your collection. This will help greatly, as the collection should be disturbed as little as possible. The temperature should remain costant, with the ideal conditions being seventy degrees fahrenheit with a maximum of five degrees fluctuation and a relative humidity of fifty percent. Fluctuating temperatures damage fabrics, as when natural fabrics breate (expand and contract with changes in temperature) with frequently changing temperature, the fibers are weakened.

Another danger to costume is pest damage. As the closet acts as a shield from dangerous elements outside, it should be safe inside. So, before storing inside, make sure the inside is clean. Also, keep food, garbage, other clothing, and clutter away from the closet area. If the door is kept closed and the area clear, there will be neither food nor light to attract insects and rodents inside the closet.

The closet area must be dry, considering both humidity and moisture. The use of silica gel is helpful here. This material picks up and releases mositure in the air, helping stabilize the humidity level, and helps to eliminate moisture condensation and mold. Allow for air circulation by leaving spaces between the pieces and make sure the closet is able to provide the circulation with an air vent on the door. Cover this



vent with muslin to filter dust and pests out of the closet environment. Plastic bags are a tragic mistake for costume storage, as the moisture in the fabric is not allowed to circulate, and water condensation follows. This condesnation will rot the fabric and may produce mold. Also, the plastic from which garment bags are made is unstable and releases gases which are harmful to fabric.

Putting costume on hangers does save space, and is acceptble if costume is in good shape. Yet, hanging puts stress on the fabric. If the costume is damaged or in poor shape, do not hang that item. Instead, wrap the costume piece in acid-free tissue or washed, unbleached muslin, and lay flat in a drawer or other protected flat space. For hanging, a shaped wooden hanger can be adapted for storing costume. Wrap the hanger in polyester fiber-fill, and cover the padded hanger in prepared muslin. Cover the hanger with the muslin so that no seams or creases are present. The costume will now have a shaped, padded, and smooth surface to help distribute stress. Fastening some buttons on the costume will also help distribute stress.

Hanging costume eliminates the need for folding. Pants should be hung by the waist, using the special hangers made for that purpose. Modify these hangerw by wrapping the clamp(s) with muslin, so no metal or wood contacts the fabric. This also eliminates creasing.

Proper air circulation allows the use of mothballs, specifically paradichlorobenzene. This will not only discourage infestation, but also help eliminate mold spores growing inside the closet. Hang the mothballs from a high point in the closet using a cheesecloth sack. Do not let the mothballs come into contact with the material inside. Remember that too many mothballs can be dangerous to people.

When putting costume into the environment you have created for it, take care that the item is not carrying insects, their eggs or mold. Fumigation is a wise precaution for items being added to the collection.

Another precaution to take when storing materials is not to mix different materials in the same unit. Keep leather, rubberized articles, and fabric apart. Grouping types of fabric (cotton, wool, etc.) may be beneficial but not totally necessary. Storing different materials together may result in the pieces reacting badly, causing discoloration and stains.

After taking all these precautions against light, temperature change, moisture, and infestation, it is important to realize the costume's greatest enemy; people. When the costume is removed from storage for

examination or display, remember some basic tips for handling the materials.

1. Use only a pencil if taking notes, as pens may mark the costume irreversibly.
2. Wash hands before handling.
3. Don't wear jewelry around objects that could snag the fabric.
4. Keep articles out of direct lighting, especially sunlight, for long period of time. The heat weakens fibers, and the light fades.
5. Leave food and drink out of the area.
6. Lay costume down on a clean dry surface.
7. Remove hangers only if necessary.
8. Leave jackets, coats, hats, or anything worn outside which may be carrying insects or their eggs out of the study area.
9. Don't put anything on top of the costume.
10. Pin back long hair.

You will discover that a good deal of costume care and storage is common sense. You may have noticed this article has suggested the use of conservation materials like acid-free tissue, untreated muslin, and silica gel. These materials, as well as more detailed reference guides are offered in mail-order catalogs. These materials are affordable, and are a small price to pay for the protection on your investment. Conservation material is important, but not as important as common sense towards care for your costume, simply by securing an area that will protect your collection from the many forces acting against it.



## "FUMIGATION"

by Bill Henson

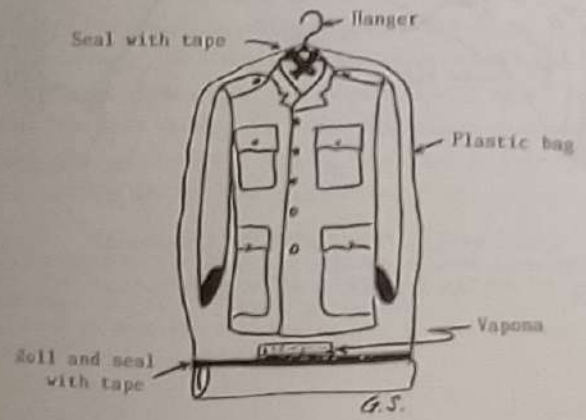
Whenever I acquire a new uniform for my collection, a question always goes through my mind. Is it free from insects? This is particularly true if the uniform is dirty or has come from a place where insects have been present. The point is, I never place a newly acquired uniform in direct contact with the rest of my collection until I am sure it is insect-free. The following is the step-by-step method which I use.

I first inspect the uniform and make any notes on my catalog card as to the condition. Next I decide if it is to be cleaned by one of the wet-cleaning methods which were described to me in an earlier article. If so, I place it in a sealed plastic bag until it can be cleaned, thus preventing the spread of insects, if any are present.

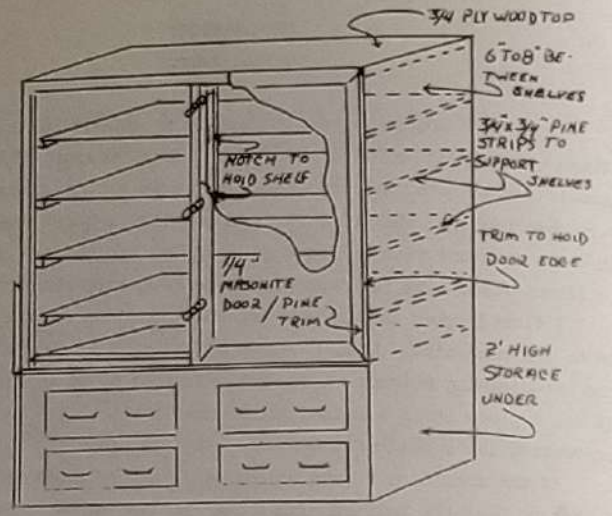
If the condition of the uniform will not tolerate wet-cleaning, I then go over the uniform with a low suction vacuum to remove dirt. After that, I put the uniform on a hanger and cover it with a heavy plastic bag. A piece of "Vapora" or "Ban-Bug" (DDVP) is placed in the bottom of the bag for at least six weeks. I wear plastic gloves whenever handling these materials and also the uniform when it is first removed from the bag since the fumigant can be a skin irritant.

Once the uniform is aired outdoors, I place it in my storage locker feeling reasonably certain that any insects have been killed before that item comes in contact with the other uniforms in my collection.

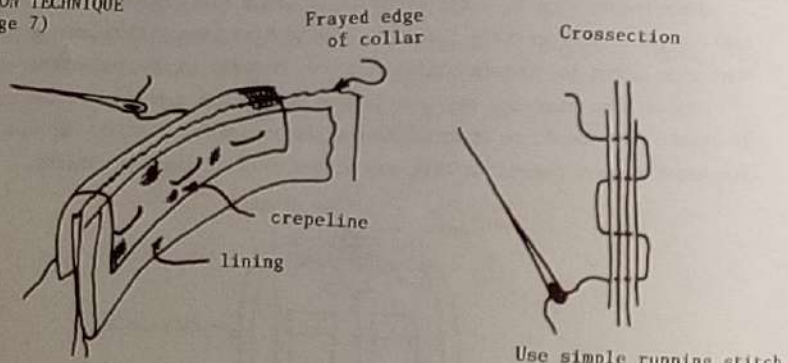
NOTE: Some plastics may have become soft after exposure to the fumigants and should be checked during the fumigation period. Do not use plastic that reacts in this way with future fumigation efforts.



STORAGE LOCKER
(see page 1)


¾ PLYWOOD TOP
6 TO 8" BETWEEN SHELVES
¾"x¾" PINE STRIPS TO SUPPORT SHELVES
NOTCH TO HOLD SHELF
TRIM TO HOLD DOOR EDGE
1/4" MASONITE DOOR / PINE TRIM
2' HIGH STORAGE UNDER

RESTORATION TECHNIQUE
(see page 7)




Method used to repair 1918 USN coat collar



## "RESTORATION OF UNIFORMS FROM INSECTS OR HARD USE."

by Bill Henson

We all, I am sure, have uniforms in our collections which may suffer, in more or less degree, from insect holes or worn and torn places. The idea is to prevent any further damage and if possible, make the appearance of the uniform more desirable. If the uniform material itself is in good condition and there are only small holes or tears, it can be made to look much better by sewing a similar piece of cloth under the area that has the damage. The new cloth should match as close as possible the original material in both color and texture. I purchased, not too long ago, two World War One P.F.C. discs of the OD wood which had no design on them at all. They will do well to repair holes in OD wool coats of that period.*

If the uniform is in very bad condition with many holes and worn places, and the fabric is weak, you may have to put in a completely new lining using muslin. The lining should be stitched in such a way as to support the original fabric from it's own weight. Holes and tears can be repaired, as mentioned above, before the lining is added. The idea is to stop any more damage to the uniform by reinforcing all torn places and weak spots. Where buttons are attached, there is usually a lot of strain on the cloth. If these places are weak, the area can be backed with a few layers of muslin. Collars and cuffs take a lot of wear and are sometimes in a very frayed condition. Lining with muslin and covering the outside with crepeline is the best solution. Crepeline is a very thin material and can be dyed to match for color and does blend in well with the cloth it covers.

Remember, before doing anything, identify all of the fabrics in the uniform and completely study your particular restoration problem. Then proceed if you think any of the above tips will help. If in doubt, do nothing. Sometimes this is the best conservation practice.

I would like to thank Mrs. Lois M. Vann, Div. of Textiles, Smithsonian Institution, for her help in the preparation of this article.

*It is not recommended that historic costume be used in conservation practice. This is to eliminate the cutting of costume for repair purposes. Also, the repair should be primarily to stop further tears and should not be mistaken for repairs done by the original owner. (editor's note)

See illustration on page 6

## "THE WET-CLEANING PROCESS FOR CONTEMPORARY MILITARY COSTUME"

by John Kristelli

When one cleans personal clothes for wear, cleaning is expected to make that article appear cleaner, whiter, and brighter. The cleaning process for old costume is a different matter, involving a somewhat different outcome. This cleaning process is called "wet-cleaning" and will benefit appearance and extend the life of the article, if done properly. Wet cleaning is actually used to remove dangerous elements from the fabric like dust, dirt, and acidity just as must as to improve its appearance.

The costume piece is lowered into a bath of water, or water and detergent (depending on the strength of the piece), with a minimum of agitation. The water used should not be tap or spring water, as they contain minerals that can be deposited into the fabric, causing damage. Distilled, deionized, filtered, or softened water is used to prevent this. A detergent may be used, but ones gentler on the fabric than most commercial detergents. Orvus W.A. Paste, D.W. 300, Igepal, or even Ivory liquid dishwashing detergent can safely be used. These detergents contain no perfumes, softners, bleaches, or other things damaging to fabrics. Soaps are rejected altogether, as they are harsher on fabrics than detergents, and leave a film on the water's surface that can get on the costume.

Military costume poses problems not encountered with most other costume. Because of insignia and added articles to the costume, many things must be considered before wet cleaning military costume. Extensive bullion embroidery, weightend silks, leather facing, linings, sweatbands, oilcloth, printing, or multiple layers of different fabrics on an article are all things that indicate an article shouldn't be wet-cleaned. Also, permanent metal articles (besides buttons), electronic components (i.e. flight gear), or hats with leather sweatbands, chinstraps, and bills on an article mean wet-cleaning isn't advisable. Also, decisions should be made as to whether something should be removed through cleaning that is a part of that piece's history. Material like starch, finishes, mud, blood, or grease that were put on the piece by the original owner may be just as important as patches and pins.



It is often said by conservators in regard to difficult conservation problems; "If in doubt, don't!" This is why I suggest that wet-cleaning be considered only for contemporary costume. Costume preceeding the First World War should be treated only by trained conservators. Age, improper storage, and the layers of fabric and finery common to older costume would not make wet-cleaning a reasonalbe alternative.

In preparing the piece for wet-cleaing, the first step is to remove all detatchable insignia. (Medals, bars, rank, etc.). Stainless steel pins should be inserted into the holes left behind by the pins, as the smaller holes might close up during the cleaning process. Make careful notes as to which pin goes where and how it is positioned. The articles removed will not be unnecesarily subjected to the detergents used, which might be harmful to the pieces. Also, the pins would hold moisture between itself and the fabric and encourage mold and rotting of fabric.

Next, vacuum the entire article before wet cleaning, as dust becomes harder to remove once wetted. Check pockets for whatever is inside. (The variety of handkerchiefs, matchbook covers, pass cards, etc. that is found is important to the articles history. Such things should be removed with careful record keeping as to which pocket it was taken from.) Place fiberglass window screening over the area to be vacuumed, to further prevent accidently pulling away parts of the costume. The screening also allows fingers to rest on the work area, keeping distance between the nozzle and the article vacuumed. Be careful not to have the nozzle come in contact with the piece. Avoid putting unnecessary stress on the costume at all times.

Finally, the dyes in the fabric must be checked for fastness. If the dyes aren't fast, they will run when wet and damage the costume's appearance. To find out if a dye is fast or not, gently squeeze the wetted fabric between dry blotters, repeating with water and detergent. If dyes haven't transferred into the blotter, the article can be safely cleaned.

The basin into which the costume is lowered should be large enough for that article to be lying flat when submerged. It should be made of porcelain, stainless steel, inert plastic, or glass. If a basin of these materials can't be found, any clean basin can be lined with a large sheet of polyethelene. Fill the basin with water mixed with the detergent, one-half ounce per gallon of water. With the water 70° to 80° F, the article can be lowered into the mixture. Sandwich the

article between two sheets of fiberglass screening, loosely sewing the costume to it if that piece is weak or damaged. Remember that fabric is weaker when wet. Don't leave soaking for more than an hour at a time. Soiled areas can be gently worked on by pressing a cellulose sponge down on it to work the detergent mixture through it.

If the costume has any stains that you insist on removing, use a small brush like a toothbrush to rub the area in the detergent-filled water. (Brass pins can be shellacked on the back to prevent further marking of the fabric, if green marks have been left.) Aside from this, don't agitate the costume. If the costume is strong, the cleaning process can be repeated, using a fresh mixture of water and detergent. When replacing the water, remember to carefully lift the costume horizontally out of the mixture. If your basin has a drain, don't allow the costume to be pulled over it or to remain in while draining.

After cleaning, rinsing is done simply by lowering the cleanined ? costume into clean water and leaving to soak. This can be done at least four times, or until no suds are seen.

For drying, the costume is to be kept between the screens and elevated, so that both sides dry evenly. This is important for military costume, which is often made of thick wools and sometimes layered combinations of fabrics. Keep the drying costume out of direct sunlight and away from any heaters.

Small flat items, like handkerchiefs, armbands, and banners can be dried perfectly flat by laying it to dry on a piece of glass or other smoth inert surface. Be sure that the surface is clean, using only a clean rag and water to ensure this. The heat and pressure make ironing historic items undesirable. Drying fabrics retain the shape they were left in while wet, so remember to place the article the way you would have it appear once dried. Cloth puttees can be dried flat, or wrapped around a tube shaped piece of screening. Pants having pleats can be layed flat along the pleats, and pushing the pleated area flat with the fingers will give the pants a pressed look without the dangers of ironing. Coats having cuff braids or high collars can be padded so they dry rounded and not flat. Campaign hats should have the entire brin lightly weighted down to prevent curling. Pad these weights with clean cloth.



You may not notice much change in appearance of the costume, but the dust, dirt, and acidity removed in the process will give the article extended life.

The procedure mentioned is a general overview of a conservation practice. Each piece is unique and should have the procedure applied to it only after consideration of that piece's unique problems and qua qualities. Some guidelines have been offered for consideration in applying this process. Although the process, if applied only after careful consideration, should benefit the costume, the author or the American Association of Military Uniform Collectors cannot be responsible for any negative results.

## "CONSERVATION NOTES ON DISPLAY FORMS"

by Dan Joyce

When using wood for a display form or cabinet it should be painted or stained then completely sealed with polyurethene varnish. The varnish will prevent gases from escaping from the wood and eventually deteriorating the uniform. The form's cardboard is highly acidic and will eventually cause damage too. Cardboard should be coated with white muslin (100% cotton) but first wash with detergent (Tide) and wash twice again without detergent to remove any damaging residue. Another option is to cover the cardboard with acid-free tissue, or 1/8 to 1/4 inch ethnofoan sheeting (purchased from Foamcraft). All screws, nails, staples, etc. should also be covered. The display head that Mr. Block describes should be sealed with polyurethane varnish too, or replaced with a styrofoam head. All of this may seem paranoid, but is standard museum conservation practiced at all better museums. The preservation of uniforms for future generations is just as important as the preservation of uniforms for our private collections. If you store uniforms on hangers you should do it on padded (with cotton covered with muslin) wooden hangers. This relieves stress on the material.

# "LEATHER CARE"

by Bill Henson

The treatment of leather objects can be complex, and a wrong treatment could be worse than no treatment at all. A leather object of any value should be treated by, or at least shown to, a leather conservator.

The proper storage and display of your objects could prevent future damage to the leather. These items need to be protected from the environment if they are to survive. By environment I mean: mold, dust, heat, light, man, and the atmosphere. If at all possible, maintain a safe range of relative humidity (45% to 55%) and a cool temperature (40 to 60 degrees F.)--higher if the relative humidity is in a safe range. I fairly constant degree of humidity and temperature will keep leather objects stable and prevent the growth of mold and mildew. Keeping them stored in closed storage units or covered display cases helps to overcome the rapid changes in relative humidity and also hleps to keep out the pollutants.

Leather which has started to turn to a pink color and finally to a red colored powder is called "red-rot". It is believed to be caused by suphuric acid from polluted air. If it has just started to turn pink it may be worth the effort to apply an acid buffering salt (potassium lactate solution) to slow down the decay. If it has gone too far and the leather has turned to a red powder on the surface, then a consolidation process should be used. A solution of a clear acrylic resin can be applied, enabling the leather object to remain intact; if left untreated in this state, red-rotted leather will eventually disintegrate away to a dry powder. Note that once this method is used it is more or less permanent.

Leather that is stiff and dry, but not crumbly from red-rot, can be treated with special dressings. Leather dressings do have their drawbacks and disadvantages, so read the directions carefully before applying. Most will darken leather, so test a spot that won't show first, to make sure that the darker color and feel of the leather is satisfactory to you. Be careful when using the dressing around metal parts, such as eyelets, rivets, etc., as some will cause metal corrosion in time.

I have used saddle soap to clean some leather objects, such as boots and belts. It doesn't seem to soften the leather much, nor darken it either. I have also used "Armor-All", which can be purchased in the auto supply department, to soften a pair of World War II combat



boots. It is a silicone product and prevents the leather from becoming stiff and dry. However, it will cause some darkening.

It is important to both store and display your leather objects with care for their own protection and preservation. Lay flat, and fill hollow objects, such as shoes and boots, with absorbent cotton. Wrap each item in acid free tissue or use well-washed and rinsed cotton sheeting, which can also be used as the filler. Be careful about using insect crystals around patent leather, as their substance will soften patent leather materials.

Torn leather can be repaired by re-aligning the edges and reinforcing with a patch behind the tear. If the leather contains oils or waxes the adhesive may not adhere. A method of removing the oils will have to be worked out.

Patching material may be Japanese tissue or a non-adhesive polyester; heavier leather may require a heavier material, such as canvas.

The adhesive should be solutions of acrylic or polyvinyl acetate resins. Polyvinyl acetate should not be applied to metal parts as it may corrode the metal after long contact. Some adhesives are: "Liquitex" from art supply stores, or "Jade 403" and potassium lactate from Talas.

## "HEADGEAR STORAGE AND DISPLAY"

by Bill Henson

The storage and display of headgear was quite a problem until I came up with a mouting device to hold them. I have about 28 pieces of headgear in my storage/display case which measures 5' long and is 2' deep and 2' high. By putting each piece on a stand of varying height and then staggering the arrangement, I was able to utilize the space available to provide a clear display of all the hats.

The stands are made of 3/4" square lumber ripped from a wide plank. The bases are 5" square and were cut from the same plank. A #6 or #8 wood screw and a drop of white glue hold the upright stand in the middle of the base very firmly. Dowel rod could also be used for the upright. These wooden parts should be varnished to prevent the escape of fumes which are dangerous to the material stored.

Two small holes are then drilled through the top of the stand to accept lengths of coathanger wire which are bent to fit the edge of the cap at four points. This wire can be made to fit any kind of headgear from overseas caps to cork helmets. It is also advisable to cover the ends of the wire that will contact the hat with adhesive-backed felt to protect the hat from damage. This method will allow the hat to be supported by the brim and edges and will help retain its shape.

In the case of steel helmets or liners, a small oval cut from masonite and smaller than the sweatband can also be used in place of the wires described above to elevate the helmet for display.

## "RECORD KEEPING, MUSEUM-STYLE"

by John Kristelli

Collectors usually begin building upon a collection slowly, adding to it piece by piece, usually through a small number of sources. At the time, each piece is received joyfully. It takes it's place among dad's good conduct medal, photograph, and pieces gotten from friends, rummage sales and flea markets. They take up a desk drawer or shoe box. The accession of each piece is vividly remembered. The collector prides himself in that he can recite the details of the piece's acquisition precisely. This attitude is carried for years, long after the collection has grown out of all the closets of the house, and then some. Much is remembered. But, and this is denied by most, a lot is forgotten. (i.e. "Where did I get this? What did he say this thing was used for," etc.) All this could have been avoided had a record keeping system been adopted at the beginning.

Many record keeping systems exist for collectors, but by far the most preferable for its completeness of record keeping, practicality for the collector, and ease of keeping up is the system used by accredited museums. This involves five different record groups.

These five different record groups each answer different needs, and work together, intertwined. These five groups are: the registration book, accession file, catalog file, documentation folder, and source file.

Registration Book

The registration book can be a binder or a spiral, and is used to record the acquisition of objects. Here a number is created for each object in an accession. The numbering system concerns the year received, the number of the accession that year, and the number of the object in that accession. For example, on July 28, 1985, one might receive a jeep cap, a cartridge belt, a visor cap, and a knife with scabbard. This was the tenth accession for 1985. So the jeep cap would receive the accession number 85.10.1, the cartridge belt 85.10.2, the visor cap 85.10.3, and the bayonet and scabbard 85.10.4A and 85.10.4B. Note that the cap has a removable devise, but is not listed with A & B subdivisions. This is because the devise is not easily removed, and may never be removed. This is an individual decision. Tag each item with this number.

The above proceedure creates your primary record.

Accession File

The accession file is a group of cards that lists the accession number and the objects they represent. This file is arranged by the accession number, and includes catalog numbers, which are discussed later. These cards also give information on the accession.

Catalog Card

The catalog cards are arranged according to a subject system created by the collector, allowing him or her to find out immediately how many of one type of object is owned, as well as where to find it. The subject catagories should be created by the individual collector, to serve individual needs. Here are some possible catagories for the forementioned jeep cap, cartridge belt, visor cap, and bayonet, respectively:

Clothing, hat, army, field
equipage, belt, army, field
Clothing, hat, army, dress
Weapon, edged, army

Of course, this is one of many variations, and more difficult or simple variations can be invented depending upon the collection's scope and needs. This system is to be invented for long term use, and each catagory should be listed with a corresponding numeric code. This numeric code becomes the catalog number, and can be written on the object's tag along with the accession number.

Documentation File

The documentation file is a place for information about that object that is in letters, news clippings, discharge papers, and so forth. This is especially helpful for those who purchase things through the mail, with correspondence about the transaction taking place. Not every item will need a file. These files can be arranged by either accession or catalog number, though an accession number will be more useful. These files will keep the information about the object that can't be put on the catalog card.

Source File

The source file is used to list alphabetically those people or companies that have provided items to you. This listing can be put on cards.

The registration book, accession file, catalog file, documentation file, and source file all work together to give the collector more complete control over a collection, and increases the value, both historic and monetary, of that collection. Museums actually discount the value of an object without accompanying records. This is wise, as knowing who it was received from



and what it was received with, along with other bits of information, help in answering questions as they come up.

It should be noted that, ideally, the records should be put on acid-free paper, with a second copy to be kept in another location in event of disaster. Yet, a less than ideal record system is much better than no record system, and the ideologies of this shouldn't be allowed to overcome the collector. I hope that I haven't done this already. It is better that this should be allowed to momentarily overcome you while it is implimented, lest the volume of the collection overcome you in the near future.

CATAGORY MASTER LIST

1 CLOTHING
- 1 hat
- 2 shirt
- 3 jacket
- 4 coat
- 5 tie — 1.1 = clothing, hat
- 6 undergarment
- 7 pants
- 8 socks
- 9 shoes
- 10 gloves

2 EQUIPAGE
- 1 field
- 2 camp/base — 2.1 = equipage, field

3 WEAPON
- 1 edged
- 2 firing — 3.1 = weapon, edged
- 3 fragmentation/exploding
- 4 striking

4 INSIGNIA
- 1 division
- 2 army
- 3 regiment
- 4 unit — 4.1.2.1 = insignia, unit, metal, navy
  - 1 cloth
  - 2 metal
    - 1 army
    - 2 navy

CATALOG RECORD

Accession Number: Catalog Number:

Specific Description: (Measurements, markings, labels)

Condition: (Wear, distinguishing marks, suggestions on how to handle)

History of Object: (Previous owners, notes on its use by original owner)

Purchase Price:

Location: (Where stored)

(Photo on Back)

ACCESSION RECORD

Catalog Number: Accession Number:

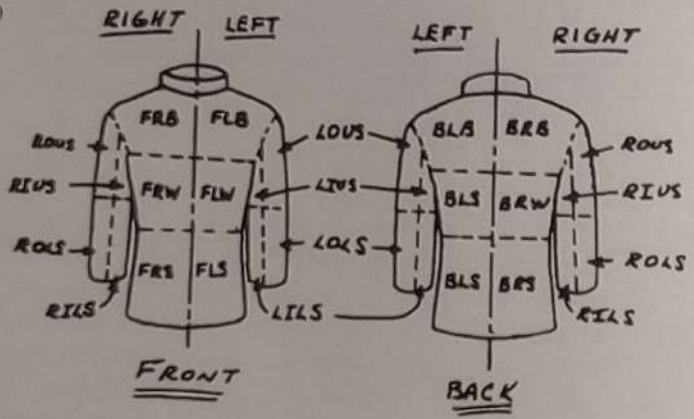
Specific Description:

Acquired From: (Name of person/business as filed in source file)

Purchase Price:

Location:

DAMAGE LOCATION KEY
(see page 19)






"RECORDING UNIFORM DAMAGE"

by Willie Henson

While helping my father record uniform damage on our catalog cards, we often ran out of room for all the information we wanted to record. I came up with a code to save time and space.

The coat is divided into sections: right, left, front, and back. The front and back are divided into three sections: breast, waist and skirt. The sleeves are divided into upper, lower, inside and outside sections. All of this is as is shown in the illustration. Note that the left side of the coat is the wearer's left, not the left side as you look at it.

Damages to the lining are located in the same manner. Lining damages are preceded by the letter "L" in parenthesis - (L)

The type and number of damages in each section as follows:

Mh = moth hole

Rp = rip

Wn = worn spot

(3) = number of holes, tears, etc.

½" = length or diameter of damage

Shoulder straps, pockets, and belts are indicated separately.

One of our catalog cards might read as follows:

(2) ¼" Mh FRB; (1) ½" Rp (L)FLW;

(1) ½" Wn on R Sh Str; Mag Btn on FLS pkt.

In other words, there are two quarter-inch diameter moth holes in the front right breast, there is a half inch long rip in the linging of the front left waist area, there is a half-inch worm spot on the right shoulder strap and the front left shirt pocket is missing a button. If you will compare the space it took to write out all of this information to the space it took in code, you will see the advantage.

Although it is not shown here, it would be equally easy to make up a similar code for trousers and breeches.

If there was ever a problem of theft of items from your collection, such detailed descriptions would undoubtedly aid in positive identification of recovered items. Also, if we were to offer these coats for sale through a printed list, it would be possible for us to give a detailed list of damages without necessarily taking the coat or pants out of storage.

See illustration on page 18

## CONSERVATION SUPPLY HOUSES

| | |
|---|---|
| Andrews/Nelson/Whitehead<br>31-10 48th Ave.<br>Long Island City NY<br>60611 | Acid-free papers, matboards, hand-made European and Oriental papers, artists supplies |
| Conservation Materials, Ltd.<br>Box 2884<br>340 Freeport Blvd.<br>Sparks, NC<br>89431 | Excellent general conservation supply house. University Products line. |
| Conservation Resources Intl.<br>1111 N. Royal St.<br>Alexandria, VA<br>22314 | General conservation supplies. Storage supplies for photographs. |
| Foamcraft<br>947 W. VanBuren<br>Chicago, IL 60607 | Ethafoam sheeting. Materials may not be valuable in long term storage. |
| Light Impressions<br>P.O. Box 3012<br>Rochester, NY<br>14614 | Photographic storage materials. Good literature. |
| Process Materials Corp.<br>329 Veterans Blvd.<br>Carlstadt, NJ<br>07072 | Conservation papers, both buffered and neutral. Storage boxes. |
| Solar Screen Co.<br>53-11 105th St.<br>Corona, NY<br>11368 | Ultraviolet filtering tubes for flouresscent lighting. UV filtering materials |
| Talas<br>213 West 35th St.<br>New York, NY<br>10001 - 1996 | General conservation supplies. Inexpensive acid free tissue. |
| University Products, Inc.<br>P.O. Box 101<br>Holyoke, MA<br>01040 | Acid free papers, storage containers and boards, general supplies |